



The Growing Christian

Study #4: Prayer

Basic Discipleship Course

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PRAYER

It was once said “A Christian is as strong as his prayer life.” This is a great truth. Prayer is a simple and direct communication with God. When you read the Bible, God speaks to you; and when you pray you speak to God. Your personal relationship with Jesus Christ cannot grow without prayer.

1. What is the purpose of prayer?
 - a. True passionate prayer can move God to your favor and even change His mind. 2 Kings 20:1-6, James 5:16.
 - b. Prayer molds us to be conformed to the will of God. Matthew 6:10.
 - c. A benefit to having a stable prayer life will fill your mind and heart filled with the peace of God. Philipians 4:6-7.
 - d. God is involved in every detail of your life. He knows exactly what you need even before you ask Him. Matthew 6:8.

- e. God permits needs in your life so that you would get closer and closer to Him. Psalm 50:15.

- f. Be careful not to forget about God. The most dangerous moment in your life is when you feel that every single need in your life has been satisfied and you have no other need; then you feel that you don't need God. Revelation 3:17.

- g. God uses needs to take you to the point where you are content and reveal to you that the only true need is to be close to the Lord Jesus Christ and His grace. The classic example of this principle is the thorn of Paul. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. That is why it is essential to give thanks in all things, including during moments of crisis and hard times in your life. 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

- h. It is really important to develop a constant attitude of prayer; and that your first reaction in difficult moments is to go to God in prayer. Psalms 71:20-21, 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

- i. Prayer helps you to see the power and the compassion of God when He responds to your cry. That was the case with Hannah in 1 Samuel 1:12, 19-20. Also read Matthew 7:7-11.

2. How should I pray?

- a. Romans 8:26-27 says clearly that we do not know how to pray or how to ask. That is why the Holy Spirit who lives in you intercedes for you in prayer.

- b. Pray always, without ceasing, constantly. Develop a style of life to pray in your mind and heart constantly.
1 Thessalonians 5:17, Luke 18:1.

- c. Do not repeat the same words time and time again.
Matthew 6:7.

- d. Speak to God as to a friend. He is your friend! John 15:13-14, Exodus 33:11, Proverbs 18:24.

e. You have direct access to God. You do not need to go to God through any other man to speak to Him. 1 Timothy 2:5, Ephesians 2:18.

f. Maintain your personal relationship with God clean from any obstacle. Is there any sin in your life that disturbs your prayers? Isaiah 59:1-2, Psalm 66:18.

I. Do you have a spirit of forgiveness?
Matthew 6:14-15.

II. Do you have resentment against someone?
1 Peter 3:7.

III. Do you pray believing? James 4:2-3.

IV. Do you ask with the wrong motives or selfishly? James 4:3, Proverbs 21:13.

V. Are you insensitive to the Word of God?
Proverbs 28:9.

3. There are five types of prayer:

a. Petition: Asking for specific things. Philippians 4:6. Many prayers are lost because they are too general.

b. Thanksgiving: Entering into God's presence with thankfulness and praise. Psalm 100.

c. Confession: when we pray confessing and asking forgiveness for our sins. Psalm 51.

d. Worship: when we pray to simply exalt God and His character. Psalms 18.

e. Intercession: Is praying for others. Colossians 1:9 and Ephesians 6:18.

Note: Maintain a prayer list. The list will help you remember what to pray for. Also, maintaining a list of answered prayers will help grow in faith.

Common Questions

1. Does God answer all my prayers?

Yes, but not always in the way and the time that we want. God is your Heavenly Father and His ways are perfect. He knows exactly what is best for you. There are prayers that in His infinite wisdom, He answers with a "NO", or with a "YES", or perhaps He will answer "WAIT". Simply trust Him. He gives the

best to those who trust in Him. He gives the best to those who allow Him to choose for them.

2. How important is it to pray for others?

Paul continually prayed for others (Romans 1:9) and asked for prayer for himself (Hebrews 13:18, 2 Thessalonians 3:1). The prophet Samuel said that it was a sin against God to not pray and intercede for others. 1 Samuel 12:23

An example of effective prayer for the benefit of others is that of a preacher in the city of Bristol, England in the seventeenth century named George Mueller. He prayed for 60 years for the salvation of several people. When he died, some of those people had already converted; but others accepted Christ at his funeral and many others converted years later.

3. Don't ever stop praying and never give up. The results of your prayers will not be completely known in this life. Do the "P.U.S.H": **P**ray **U**ntil **S**omething **H**appens! Keep pushing.

Review

1. What is it that prayer does?

2. What is the result of a prayer life?

3. Prayer brings you closer to God so that He can demonstrate His provision in each need and situation. What do the following verses teach us about God and our needs?
 - a. Matthew 6:8

 - b. Psalm 50:15

4. What should your first reaction be in a crisis?

5. What attitudes interfere with your prayers?

6. In how many ways does God answer our prayers?

Verses to memorize:

1Timothy 2:5, Psalm 66:18, and 1 Thessalonians 6:18

Notes